

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000099

Senator Cameron asked on 01 June 2015 on proof Hansard page 28

Question

Enterprise agreements

Senator CAMERON: Are you aware of any other service industries that are increasing the hours of work of their employees around the country?

Ms Leon: I may have people here from my enterprise agreement team who can advise.

Senator CAMERON: Where are these extra hours being worked in a formal negotiated outcome?

Ms Leon: We would probably have to take that on notice. We run a database of all of the enterprise agreements that are entered into in the country, but there are thousands and thousands of them. We would have to take on notice as to where that is.

Dr Morehead: There are 18,950 odd enterprise agreements current at the moment.

Senator CAMERON: Ms Leon, are you aware of any industry—because this is an industry—

Ms Leon: It is possible that people in my department are, but that is what I have indicated to you. It is not something that—as secretary, I do not spend my time reading other people's enterprise agreements, but I do have a section that maintains a database of enterprise agreements. So we can take on notice the question of what is occurring in other service industries.

Answer

The National Employment Standards limit the maximum hours to be worked in a week to 38, plus reasonable additional hours. Of the 18,951 federal enterprise agreements current (not nominally expired) at 31 December 2014, 9,115 agreements (or 48.1 per cent) have 38 working hours per week, covering approximately 1.38 million employees (or 57.5 per cent of all employees covered by current agreements).

From all current agreements, the Department of Employment identified 25 from tertiary (or service) industries that increased their hours of work when compared with the agreements they replaced. Of these 25 agreements, 18 involve an increase of two or more hours per week, mostly from 36 hours to 38 hours.

Tertiary (or services) industries are defined by the ABS and include: Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation and food services; Information media and telecommunications; Financial and insurance services; Rental, hiring and real estate services; Professional, scientific and technical services; Administrative and support services; Public administration and safety; Education and training; Health care and social assistance; Arts and recreation services; and Other services. Tertiary (or services) industries exclude: Agriculture; Mining; Manufacturing; Construction; Electricity, gas, water and waste services; and Transport, postal and warehousing.

The analysis is drawn from the Workplace Agreements Database, which contains data on federal enterprise agreements; agreements made under a state system, unregistered

agreements, and most state government and state public sector agreements are not included.

The 25 agreements do not include agreements that may have increased their working hours, if that increase varies among different types of employees.